



## Fresno County Farm Bureau

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### PLF presents petitions; thousands support effort to "Save Our Water"

At a news conference Wednesday, petitions with signatures from more than 12,000 people were presented to Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger, urging him to call on President Obama to support convening the so-called "God Squad" in an effort to restore water supplies for state and federal water projects.

The Pacific Legal Foundation (PLF) has been gathering signatures for the past several weeks in its "Save Our Water" campaign that urges the Endangered Species Committee, a panel of cabinet officials, to countermand Endangered Species Act (ESA) restrictions that have caused excessive destruction to jobs and the economy. The petition is directed toward the governor and the Obama administration because the ESA gives the governor of any state explicit authority to formally ask the Federal government for the convening of this Committee.

PLF leaders were joined by representatives from Western Growers, the California Chamber of Commerce, Rep. George Radanovich, among others on the west steps of the Capitol for the news conference. The deadline for the governor to submit a petition to the Department of the Interior is September 2.

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### Legislation Update and Alert

By Teresa Plascencia

FCFB Governmental Affairs Coordinator

In the next four weeks, there will be several legislative maneuvers in Sacramento as legislators try to pass hundreds of bills prior to the September 11 deadline. FARM TEAM will be updating members on legislation while allowing them to take action on certain bills.

Bills to support include:

- **AB 854 Farm Labor Contractors:** Aims to protect the workforce.
- **AB 1288 E-Verify System:** Prevents requirements to use the E-Verify system.

Farm Bureau is opposed to:

- **SB 789 Unionization in Agriculture:** Weakens the Agricultural Labor Relations Act.
- **SCA 23 Antibiotics in Food Animals:** Bans the use of antibiotics for growth promotion.

To see a more detailed list of legislation and to submit your comments, please visit FARM TEAM's website: <http://capwiz.com/cfbf/state/main/?state=CA>.

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### **Labor Compliance Workshop for Southeast Asian farmers set for Aug. 28**

A Small Farm Regulatory Compliance Workshop and listening session focusing on labor law enforcement will be held on Friday, Aug. 28 from 1 to 4:30 p.m. at the U.C. Cooperative Extension, 1720 S. Maple Ave., Fresno. The free workshop is designed to help small Southeast Asian farmers, business owners and homeowners to better understand required regulations and the resources available to them.

The workshop is sponsored by the Fresno County U.C. Cooperative Extension, Lao American Foundation and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The guest speaker will be California State Senator Leland Yee, who has authored bills such as SB 677, which would have exempt small family farm owners from carrying Workers' Compensation Insurance for immediate family members.

Other speakers include representatives from Cal/OSHA, State Compensation Insurance Fund and U.S. HUD-Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity. Some of the discussion topics include: field sweeps; field citations and the appeal process from OSHA; Workers' Compensation Insurance coverage for family members; Illness and Injury Prevention Program; and legislative issues.

Translation into Hmong and Lao will be provided. For additional details, contact Richard Molinar at (559) 456-7575.

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### **Food Bank has urgent need for volunteers**

Dana Wilkie, of the Community Food Bank, reported Food Bank has an urgent need for volunteers to help with the community food distributions in drought-impacted communities.

As reported in Friday Follow Up last week, more than three million pounds of food each month is being distributed to five rural communities in west Fresno County, including Huron, San Joaquin, Firebaugh, Mendota and Selma.

The joint effort is administered by the Community Food Bank, County of Fresno, HandsOn Central California, along with federal and state agencies. The Food Bank estimates at least 450 volunteers will be needed each week to distribute the food. The distributions are held on the first and third Thursdays of the month in Huron; first and third Tuesdays in San Joaquin; second and fourth Fridays in Firebaugh; second and fourth Tuesdays in Mendota; and second and fourth Thursdays in Selma.

Volunteers can sign-up on-line at: [vols4disaster@handsoncentralcal.org](mailto:vols4disaster@handsoncentralcal.org). For details, contact HandsOn Central California at: (559) 237-3101; or the Food Bank at (559) 237-3663.

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### **FAACT Program is accepting nominations for Class VII until Aug. 28**

Next Friday, Aug. 28 is the deadline to submit applications to participate in Fresno County Farm Bureau's 2009-10 Future Advocates for Agriculture Concerned about Tomorrow (FAACT) Class VII Leadership Development Program.

The FAACT Leadership Development Program provides community leaders with a comprehensive eight-month program highlighting specific issues in agriculture. The Class will meet one day a month (on Mondays) from October through June (excluding December). Agricultural, non-agricultural and community-minded people are encouraged to apply. Tuition for the program is \$350 per person.

Applications are available online at: [www.fcfb.org](http://www.fcfb.org). For direct questions, contact Teresa Plascencia at (559) 237-0263 or via email: [teresap@fcfb.org](mailto:teresap@fcfb.org).

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### **2009 raisin crop estimated to be average size**

Fresno County's raisin harvest has already begun for many dried-on-the-vine varieties and will soon begin for the more traditional hand-pick tray method varieties.

The 2009 California raisin crop is forecasted to be an average-sized crop, the industry reported. Cooler, wetter weather early in the summer has led to some mildew problems. While berry size appears to vary greatly, berries per bunch are reported to be down. However, weather has been favorable during the growing season thus far, and vines look good. The raisin crop is ahead of schedule and maturing nicely and quality appears to be better than 2008.

This year's raisin-grape forecast is 2.10 million tons. Based on the objective measurement survey, bunches per vine totaled 32.0 compared to 40.6 recorded in 2008. The state has about 221,000 bearing acres of raisin grapes. The forecast is based on the results of the Raisin Grape Objective Measurement Survey conducted in July.

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### **CWA Scholarship application deadline is Sept. 15**

The Central Valley Chapter of California Women for Agriculture (CWA) is sponsoring \$2,000 in scholarships for college-level students who plan to attend local colleges. The deadline to apply is Sept. 15.

The scholarship amount will be divided among one or more students at the discretion of the selection committee. To be eligible, the student must be at a sophomore, junior or senior college level, pursuing a career in agriculture, and is enrolled, or plans to enroll, as a full-time agriculture major (minimum of 12 units) for the 2009 Fall semester at an accredited community college or state institution in Fresno or Madera counties. These colleges include: California State University, Fresno; and Clovis Center, Fresno City, Madera Center, Reedley or West Hills community colleges. The applicant is to demonstrate financial need, scholastic ability and achievements and community service, preferably agricultural related activities.

For an application and details about the requirements, visit the CWA Web site at: [www.cawomen4ag.com/cvcwa](http://www.cawomen4ag.com/cvcwa), or contact CWA Scholarship Committee Chair Jane Bedrosian, at (559) 351-3651 or via email: [KBedro@aol.com](mailto:KBedro@aol.com). You also may contact Marlene Miyasaki at [marlenem@csufresno.edu](mailto:marlenem@csufresno.edu).

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### **Next Week's Calendar**

- Aug. 24** CA Farm Water Coalition Board of Directors, 10 a.m., Sacramento
- Aug. 25** San Joaquin Political Academy Board of Directors, 11 a.m., Fresno Association of Realtors; Fresno Fair Board of Directors meeting, 4 p.m., Fairgrounds
- Aug. 28** Fresno Ag Roundtable, 7 a.m., Marie Calendar's restaurant, Cedar and Shaw Avenues; CA Regional Water Quality Control Board Workshop on regional groundwater protection strategy, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., Regional Water Board office, 1685 E St., Fresno

### **This Week's Calendar**

- Aug. 19** Greater Fresno Area Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors
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